

7/6/08

The Crossing of The Red Sea

Ex. 14:1-31

The children of Israel have made their exodus from their bondage of slavery and they are on the move.

God was directing Israel, His First born, with complete protection in mind. Ex. 13:17-22

1. God did not lead them through the land of the Philistines, knowing if they perceived potential war, they would turn back to Egypt, even though it was a shorter distance. vs. 17

2. Therefore God led the Hebrews around the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, south-easterly, the Sinai Peninsula, in orderly ranks. vs. 18

* Remember Moses was to take the children of Israel back to Midian, to Mount Sinai, where Moses first saw the burning bush. Ex. 3:12, 5:3

3. Moses was faithful to take the bones of Joseph with him, even as Joseph by faith had them promise under oath, for God would certainly visit them. vs. 19

* This is recorded in Hebrews. Heb. 11:22

4. They traveled from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. vs. 20

5. The Lord God was ever present with the people to provide their needs and protect them. vs. 21-22

- a. The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way by night in a pillar of fire to give them light. vs. 21
- b. The purpose was to direct them constantly, so as to go by day and night. vs. 21c
- c. God did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people. vs. 22
 - * The Shekinah glory of Yahweh being ever present throughout their forty years!

The crossing of the Red Sea is laid out for us in three progressive movements.

- I.** The march of Israel to the Red Sea. vs. 1-12
 - II.** The plan of God for Israel to cross the Red Sea. vs. 13-20
 - III.** The crossing of Israel at the Red Sea. vs. 14-31
- I. The march of Israel to the Red Sea. vs. 1-12**
- A.** The God of Israel gave perfect directions leaving Egypt. vs. 1-4
 - 1.** The LORD Yahweh was directing Moses. vs. 1-2
 - a. The Lord spoke to Moses and instructed him to speak to the children of Israel. vs. 1-2a

- b. They were to turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon. vs. 2b-d
- c. They were to camp before it by the sea. vs. 2e
- 2. The LORD Yahweh having foreknowledge, knew the thoughts of Pharaoh. vs. 3
 - a. Pharaoh would conclude the people of Israel were bewildered by the land. vs. 3a-b
 - b. Pharaoh would say that the wilderness had closed them in, they had entrapped themselves. vs. 3c
- 3. The Lord would honor the hard heart of Pharaoh. of rebellion. vs. 4
 - a. God would harden his heart. vs. 4a
 - * Hardened “chazaq” is to make firm, strengthen, honoring his choice.
 - b. The outcome would be that Pharaoh would pursue them. vs. 4b
 - * Pride and vengeance is never satisfied!
 - c. God would gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army. vs. 4c
 - * They would be destroyed!
 - d. The final outcome would be, that the Egyptians would know that He was the LORD.” And they did so. vs. 4d-e

- B. The Pharaoh had regretful reflections about releasing the Hebrews from Egypt. vs. 5-9
 - 1. The news reached the Pharaoh about the exodus of the people. vs. 5a
 - * They were probably beyond the three day journey now.
 - 2. The response of Pharaoh and his servants was to turn their hearts against the Hebrews. vs. 5b
 - * The hatred merely grew!
 - 3. They regretted letting them go and said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” vs. 5c-e
 - * 600,000 men was a large work-force to lose.
 - 4. The Pharaoh made ready his chariot and took his people with him. vs. 6
 - 5. Pharaoh took with him, his army. vs. 7
 - a. “He took six hundred choice chariots. vs. 7a
 - b. He took all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them.” vs. 7b
 - * It has been estimated there would be at least 100,000 foot soldiers.
 - 6. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel. vs. 8a-b
 - * Hardened “chazaq”, to strengthen or make firm, honoring his choice.

7. The children of Israel went out with boldness. vs. 8c
 - a. Being unaware of he pursuit.
 - b. Being glad to be free.
8. The Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon. vs. 9
 - a. This has to be on the east shore of the Sinai Peninsula, at the Gulf of Aqaba.
 - b. It can not be at the Gulf of Suez, Moses is going to Media, in Arabia.

C. The people of Israel had second thoughts about having left Egypt. vs. 10-14

1. When Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes. vs. 10a-b
 - a. They had to have been so shocked.
 - b. They are all on foot.
2. They beheld the Egyptians marching after them. vs. 10c-d
 - a. They knew t Pharaoh's evil heart.
 - b. They knew he was coming for vengeance.
3. The Hebrews were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. vs. 10e-f
 - a. They were petrified.
 - b. Their fear drove them to God.
4. The Hebrews lashed out at Moses. vs. 11

- a. They insulted Moses by saying, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness?" vs. 11a-c
 - b. They accused Moses by saying, "Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?" vs. 11d-e
 - 1) People are funny, they love help but just let something go wrong!
 - 2) This is a mere foretaste of the future 38 years in the wilderness.
5. The Hebrews reminded Moses of their first objections to his wanting to deliver them. vs. 12
- a. They were content in their slavery, "Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?'" vs. 12a-c
 - b. They were unappreciative, "For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." vs. 12d

Illustration

Joseph was accused falsely by the wife of Potiphar, yet he trusted God and lived to see the good and great benefit to himself and his family.

Application

1. God is the only One Who knows what is best for our lives, so He wants to guide and direct us, even if there is a Red Sea in front of us.

- a. When we were in the world, a type of Egypt, we did what we wanted, went where we wanted, we were our own masters.
- b. If I am a Christian, I am no longer my own, I have been redeemed and belong to Christ.
- c. Therefore all my decisions are to be subject to Christ, no exception, for He knows future things and what He is going to do for me.
 - 1) The Psalmist prayed, “**Direct** my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.” Ps. 119:133
 - 2) Jesus told His disciples, “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will **guide** you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” Jn. 16:13

2. The ways of God are not looked upon by those in the world as being the wisest and look upon Christians as fools, even as Pharaoh thought.

- a. Thinking we have wasted our lives by living for Christ.
- b. The obedience to follow Christ, at whatever the cost, is looked down upon by non-Christians.
- c. It may be leaving a good job to go into ministry or making a move in location because God is directing you.

d. Being identified with Christ can bring about persecution, even the loss of life.

* “For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us.” 2Cor. 1:8-10

3. The people of God are fickle, when things are going well, then they are rejoicing but when things are not going well, then they are quick to accuse, blame and lash out, even as the people did to Moses before the Red Sea.

- a. At times women blame the husband for their situation, as he is being obedient to God.
- b. At other times a carnal husband or an unbelieving husband will blame their wife for their unhappiness, telling them they spend too much time in church or too carried away with their Christianity.
- c. Sill other time, people blame the leaders of the church for their own choices or situations they have placed themselves in.
 - * “And you shall remember that the LORD your God **led** you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you

and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.” Deut. 8:2

The march of Israel to the Red Sea was a test of faith!

II. The plan of God for Israel to cross the Red Sea. vs. 13-20

A. The man of God, Moses, encouraged the people to depend on God. vs. 13-14

1. Moses admonished the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today.” vs. 13a-e
2. Moses gave a promise to the people, “For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.” vs. 13f-g
3. Moses told them God would defend them, “The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace”, rest. vs. 14

B. The man of God, Moses, was rebuked and instructed by God. vs. 15-16

1. Moses was strongly rebuked for crying to Yahweh. vs. 15a-b
 - a. Though there is no record of the crying to God, it is affirmed by God.

b. Though Moses was pointing the people to God, he himself was not doing what he was supposed to do.

2. Moses was supposed to be telling the children of Israel to go forward. vs. 15c
 - a. Whether he was hesitant.
 - b. Or slow to respond, we are not told.
3. Moses was to be the instrument of God’s miracle of dividing the Red Sea. vs. 16
 - a. He was told to lift up his rod, and stretch out his hand over the sea and divide it. vs. 16a-b
 - 1) The word divide “boqa’ “, means to cleave or split.
 - 2) The word is used for the braking open of the fountains of the great deep at the flood. Gen. 7:11
 - b. The miracle is confirmed by the two particulars. vs. 16c
 - 1) The people would go on dry ground, the sea-floor would be completely dry, not damp.
 - 2) The children of Israel would go through the midst of the sea, not some shallow area or reeds.

B. The plan and strategy was articulated by God. vs. 17-20

1. The plan of God. vs. 17-18
 - a. God would honor the self-willed rebellion of the Egyptians. vs. 17

- 1) Yahweh would harden the hearts of the Egyptians and they would follow the Hebrews. vs. 17a-b
* The word hardened “chazaq”, remember means to strengthen or make firm, honoring his choice.
- 2) The outcome would be that Yahweh would gain honor over Pharaoh, all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. vs. 17c-e
- b. The Egyptians would understand who Yahweh was finally. vs. 18
 - 1) The Egyptians would know that He was the LORD Yahweh. vs. 18a
 - 2) This would be when He gained honor for Himself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen. vs. 18b-d
* Being humbled and destroyed!
2. The strategy of God. vs. 19-20
 - a. The Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them, becoming a barrier to be a shield from the Egyptians. vs. 19a
* This could be a Christophany?
 - b. The pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them, as another barrier. vs. 19b
 - c. The affect of the cloud between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel are given. vs. 20

- 1) The cloud became darkness to the Egyptians. vs. 20a-b
- 2) The cloud gave light by night to the Hebrews. vs. 20c
- 3) The cloud served as an invisible fence, so the one did not come near the other all night. vs. 20d

Illustration

Joseph told his brother after having gone through treachery, deceit and all the difficulties, “But as for you, you **meant evil** against me; but God **meant** it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.” Gen. 50:20

Application

1. Our entire life as Christians is a life of faith.
 - a. I can not say this enough, for faith to be biblical, it must be related to God’s word.
 - b. God only honor His word, not our own opinions or beliefs.
 - c. Faith is not presumptuousness or the exercise of one’s own self-will.
 - d. Faith is God directing me personally in a situation, course of action or obedience to His will, that does not contradict His word.
* “Now **faith** is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen... But without **faith** it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a

rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Heb. 11:1, 6

2. Your Red Sea experience could be trusting God to defend you against a very difficult situation.

- a. It could be false accusations that have been brought against you or true ones.
- b. It could be a very difficult husband or wife you live with or asking for a divorce?
- c. It could be that you have been struck with illness and from the human perspective, there is no hope.
- d. It could be your children, that are not walking with God.

* “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Eph. 3:20

3. The plans and ways of God are not in our control, nor depend on our ability to understand them, for God may see a greater good in the long-run, than in my immediate deliverance, like Joseph’s or Paul’s situations.

- a. God through Isaiah says, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” Is. 55:8-9

- b. God told Jeremiah when he called for him to redeem the property at Anathoth, “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything **too hard** for Me?” Jer. 32:27

The plan of God for Israel to cross the Red Sea was to be an experience by faith!

III. The crossing of Israel at the Red Sea. vs. 21-31

A. The miracle of parting the Red Sea. vs. 21-25

1. The man Moses was a mere instrument of God. vs. 21

a. Moses in faith stretched out his hand over the sea. vs. 21a

1) As he had done to turn the Nile River into blood. Ex. 7:19

2) As he had done to bring the hail. Ex. 9:22

b. The LORD caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind all that night, vs. 21b

1) This is not normal wind.

2) This is the Omnipotent God in control of His creation.

3) By the blast of Your nostrils the waters were gathered together. Ex. 15:8a-b

- c. God made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. vs. 21c-d
* The two specific details of the miracle is confirmed. vs. 16
- 2. The Hebrews marched down into the Sea floor. vs. 22
 - a. The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground by faith. vs. 22a
 - b. The waters were a wall on their right hand and on their left. vs. 22b
* The Psalmist believed in the crossing of the Red Sea, “The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were afraid; The depths also trembled. The clouds poured out water; The skies sent out a sound; Your arrows also flashed about. The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known. You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron.” Ps. 77:16-20
- 3. The Egyptians followed hard after the Hebrews. vs. 23

- a. The Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea. vs. 24a
- b. The entire army, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. vs. 24b-d
- 4. The direct involvement of God against the Egyptians is clearly stated. vs. 24-25
 - a. God was the sentinel of Israel, so in the morning watch the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud. vs. 24a-c
 - b. God troubled the army of the Egyptians. vs. 24d
 - 1) The word troubled “haman”, means to move noisily, confuse and discomfit.
 - 2) God was the defender of Israel.
- 5. The activities of God in the battle are stated.
 - a. Yahweh took off their chariot wheels. vs. 25a
 - b. The result was that they drove them with difficulty. vs. 25b
 - c. The response of the Egyptians was, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.” vs. 25c
* The Song of Moses say, “The LORD is a man of war; The LORD is His name. Pharaoh’s

chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; They sank to the bottom like a stone. Ex. 15:3-5

6. The traditional crossing is in the Gulf of Suez and Mount Sinai in the wilderness of Sinai, but this can not be correct.
 - a. Moses was headed back to Media in Arabia, as God commanded to bring the people, to mount Sinai. Ex. 3:12
 - b. Paul the apostle confirms that Mount Horeb or Sinai is in Arabia. Gal. 4:25
 - c. Therefore the crossing of the Red Sea was at the Gulf of Aqaba.
 - d. There have been found chariots remains and wheel in this area.
 - e. There is an area with a mild slope of 6 degrees going to a depth of 900 to 1000 feet able to accommodate such a mass population, while the remaining topography of the Gulf of Aqaba is steep and about 5,000 feet deep.
 - e. The entire journey is given, arriving to the wilderness of Sinai, encamping before the mountain of God, Horeb, in Media, on the third month after the exodus of Israel from Egypt. Ex. 12:17-19:1-2

- B. The miracle for destroying the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. vs. 26-31
 1. The command was given to Moses by Yahweh. vs. 26
 - a. The command was the same as when he parted the sea, “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea.” vs. 2a-b
 - b. The purpose is clear, “That the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” vs. 2c-e
 2. The command was obeyed by Moses. vs. 27-28
 - a. The general description is given first. vs. 27
 - 1) “Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it.” vs. 27a-d
 - * The emphasis is that the sea returned to its full depth.
 - 2) The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. vs. 27e
 - * No one helped God, nor had any part in defeating the Egyptians!
 - b. The specific description was given second. vs. 28
 - 1) “Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the

- horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them.” vs. 28a-c
- 2) “Not so much as one of them, the Egyptians, remained.” vs. 28d
3. The command obeyed by Israel allowed them to experience the miracle. vs. 29
- a. In contrast to the Egyptians, “But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.” vs. 29a
- b. In view of an authentic miracle, “The waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.” vs. 29b
- 1) This was stated before the miracle, during the miracle and after the miracle.
- 2) Do you think God wanted Moses to communicate that this was a miracle? YES!
- 3) Isaiah believed the crossing of the Red Sea, “Are You not the One who dried up **the sea**, The waters of the great deep; That made the depths of **the sea** a road For the redeemed to cross over?” Is. 51:10
4. The summary statement of crossing the Red Sea. vs. 30-31
- a. God was responsible for the deliverance of Israel, alone, “So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw

- the Egyptians dead on the seashore. vs. 30
- b. God was building their faith in Him alone, “Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt.” vs. 31a
- c. God was seeking their trust in Him, alone, “The people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.” vs. 31b-c
- * “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” Ja. 1:2-4

Illustration

“Peter said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.” Matt. 14:28-29

* I know Peter sank, yet he walked on water by faith, no other disciples ever was able to know anything about that experience, only Peter!

Application

1. We must never forget the miracles God has done for us by changing our hearts and minds.

- a. The most basic is our salvation from the world a type of Egypt.
 - b. The impact God has had to change our entire world view, that there is a Creator and Savior who is very concerned about saving lost man and promises to return for us.
 - c. The holiness of God that has impressed us and the imparting of His Holy Spirit to us, that we might live to His glory.
 - d. Turning our selfish lives into daily self-less lives to benefit others, our wives, husband, children, friends and others in contact with.
* Rom. 12:1-2, Phil. 2:5-11
2. The great benefit of walking by faith obeying God, is knowing that it was God and no one else.
- a. You will not be able to give the glory to your Pastor.
 - b. You will not be able to take the glory yourself.
 - c. You will simply give all the glory to God, for what He has done for you, because you were there.
 - 1) You saw God turn a bad situation for good.
 - 2) You saw God change the heart of your husband, wife or children.
 - 3) You saw God how He provided for you.
 - 4) You saw how God protected you.
 - a) Paul believed in the crossing of the Red Sea, “Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our

fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.” 1Cor. 10:1-5

b) “Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man **glory** in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man **glory** in his might, Nor let the rich man **glory** in his riches; But let him who glories **glory** in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD.”
Jer. 9:23-24

The crossing of Israel at the Red Sea was a testimony of faith!

Conclusion

The crossing of the Red Sea has been laid out for us in three progressive movements:

- I. The march of Israel to the Red Sea was a test of faith!

- II.** The plan of God for Israel to cross the Red Sea was to be an experience by faith!
- III.** The crossing of Israel at the Red Sea was a testimony of faith!